(b) if so, whether India has also taken any such step; and

(c) if so, when and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Denial of access to US markets by steel exporters

476. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that, from Anti-dumping actions, Washington has started employing ISO quality standards as yet another device to deny market access for iron and steel products from India;

(b) whether this move does not amount to a non-tariff barrier and thereby violating the principle of free-trade;

(c) if so, how Government are thinking of dealing with the situation;

(d) whether any negotiations have been made with the US Administration; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Export of Steel

477. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether, of late China, has adopted a rigid posture with regard to export of steel and steel products from India to the Chinese market;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether a high-level delegation led by the Secretary, Ministry of Steel visited China recently; and

(d) if so, whether the matter was discussed with the Chinese authorities to the satisfaction of both the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

National policy on Steel

478. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 3858, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 25th April, 2003 and state;

(a) whether the National Policy on steel has been finalised;

(b) if not, whether a Committee was set up to formulate Natipnal Policy on steel;

(c) whether the recommendations of the Committee has been obtained; if so, the details thereof;

(d) how Government are going to ensure protection to domestic industry from unfair competition monitoring the capacity and investment, arrangement of finance, land acquisition, etc.; and

(e) what plans are there to reduce the cost of steel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The draft National Steel Policy prepared by the Committee under the Chairmanship of the Development Commissioner for Iron & Steel has been circulated amongst a duly constituted Core Task Group (CTG), comprising of professionals and economists who are connected with the steel sector. The comments of individual members of the CTG are being obtained.

(d) In a liberalised scenario the Government plays the role of a facilitator. Through policy initiatives the Government provides an enabling environment to foster the growth of steel industry.